

Sprechen Sie Deutsch?

Stuttgart service keeps community members from becoming lost in translation

By Mildred Green

Living in Germany can be adventurous for many Americans, but it can also present a few challenges for those who do not *Deutsch sprechen*.

Stuttgart's Army Community Service is helping residents who experience challenges with the language barrier by offering full-time German translation services.

Andrea Keating, a German native, has taken on the newly-created position of German translator at ACS Mondays to Fridays, 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Keating – who first worked with ACS as a volunteer translator – continues to offer a variety of unofficial translation services such as translating phone and electric bills.

In addition, she answers questions about Germany and the Stuttgart area.

Everyone gets help

As a former customer service worker, Keating strives for people



Keating

to leave happy.

"No one leaves here without getting help," she said.

However, in order for Keating to best assist customers, she stressed the importance of them bringing her as much information as possible.

Documents that need to be translated can be dropped off at ACS, and customers will be notified when they are ready.

Appointments are preferred

when an in-depth translation of a document is needed. Otherwise, those seeking translation services from Keating are seen on a walk-in basis.

All questions welcome

Keating lived for 15 years in the United States, and remembers what it was like her first time in a foreign country.

She encourages community members to come by and see her if there is anything they do not understand.

A document may not seem to be important, but it could be, she said.

One of the things Keating said she likes best about her job is the variety of questions she receives.

Customer's questions have varied from reading a bill to finding a tanning salon, she recalled.

"There is never a dull moment in my job," Keating said. "It is a lot of fun."

For more information call 430-7176/ civ. 0711-680-7176 or visit ACS on Patch Barracks in building 2307.

Services provided

- ◆ Translating bills or other unofficial, non-medical documents (German to English or English to German).
- ◆ Calling German agencies on behalf of customers , including making phone calls for appointments.
- ◆ Looking up information in the German phone book, on the Internet, in newspapers and via other media.
- ◆ Speaking with a German landlord on the phone or in writing (not for official purposes).
- ◆ Completing special projects such as translating a dinner menu or assembling hotel listings.
- ◆ Providing answers to veterinary, transportation and other common questions .

Services not provided

- ◆ Telephone calls or inquiries in writing regarding medical or legal records.
- ◆ Translation of medical, legal or housing documents.
- ◆ Tax and VAT issues.